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EPA-REGION 10

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Portland, OR 97216

U.S. EPA
ATTN: Harbor Comments
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Portland, OR 97205

The EPA's current plan to address the issue of pollution underneath the waters of the Willamette River will have serious economic impacts on Portland. That concerns me. Of course, we don't want hazardous materials in the Willamette to rise to the surface and affect the environment. The river is a central part of our lives here and also is a large driver of our entire economy. A clean and healthy river matters to both residents and businesses. I'm worried that the dredging up of the river bottom that the EPA wants to begin soon will disrupt so much more here in Portland than the waters of the river itself.

I oppose the plan because nature heals itself; the Willamette is actually doing this now and has been for all the years since the EPA tested it for pollution in 2004. In 2014, their own study showed that contamination was down 40%. I oppose the current EPA plan even more because the \$1.4 billion it will cost will damage our economy. We depend on travel and commerce on the river and we depend on it looking good for tourism.

The country has just spent eight years coming out of a recession. This is a bad time for such a project that could undo all the economic progress we've made. I'm a landscape designer, so I know how important the natural beauty of our area is. The Willamette and the waterfront are essential parts of what makes Portland a great place to live and also a great place to visit. A project like the dredging proposed by the EPA could not help but have a negative impact. My husband and I don't recreate on the river, but we do enjoy going to the waterfront park. There are always so many fun activities going on in that area. Years of dredging and construction activity would destroy what makes the waterfront attractive. I'd have to seriously reconsider if I wanted to keep going there, especially if it were noisy. I'm sure other residents and tourists would feel the same.

The Willamette River is an important part of what makes Portland the city it is. We want to preserve and protect it, but we don't want to destroy our economy doing it. Giving the river the time it needs to continue the natural restoration process will both safeguard the environment and preserve our economy. This is why the EPA's current proposal should not be supported.

Sincerely,
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